

Message Text

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FM AMEMBASSY LAGOS

TO SECSTATE WASHDC 003

INFO AMEMBASSY KINSHASA

AMEMBASSY NAIROBI

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FOR COMMERCE

E. O. 11652 : N/ A

TAGS : ETRN, NI

SUBJ : AIRPORT DEVELOPMENT TRADE MISSION NOVEMBER 1973

REF : STATE 119418

1. BEGIN SUMMARY: EMBASSY BELIEVES AIRPORT IMPROVEMENT PROGRAM DOES OFFER GOOD PROMISE FOR U. S. SALES IN NIGERIA, BUT WE DO NOT SEE HOW A TRADE MISSION COULD BE SUCCESSFUL IN THIS AREA NOW THAT DEADLINE FOR PRE- QUALIFICATION TENDERS FOR COUNTRY- WIDE AIRPORT DEVELOPMENT PROGRAM HAS PASSED. SALES WILL NOW HAVE TO BE MADE THROUGH SUCCESSFUL CONTRACTORS. END SUMMARY.

2. EMBASSY COMMENTS ON QUESTIONS IN REFTEL ARE AS FOLLOWS:

A. EMBASSY REGRETS THAT IN PLANNING TRADE MISSION COMMERCE RELIED ON SUMMARY DATA IN TRENDS REPORT, WHICH UNFORTUNATELY CONTAINED TYPOGRAPHICAL ERROR IN DATE, RATHER THAN ON OUR CONTINUING DETAILED REPORTING ON AIRPORT PROGRAM. AS REPORTED LAGOS 9569 OF DECEMBER 12, 1972, CORRECT DEADLINE FOR CONTRACTORS TO SUBMIT BIDS TO PREQUALIFY FOR 150 MILLION DOLLAR COUNTRY- WIDE AIRPORT DEVELOPMENT PROJECTS IN NIGERIA, INCLUDING IKEJA, WAS JANUARY 13, 1973. SINCE THEN IN LAGOS 2396 OF

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MARCH 23, 1973 WE STRESSED OUR VIEW THAT A TRADE MISSION FOR AIRPORT CONSTRUCTION AND DEVELOPMENT IN NOVEMBER WOULD BE AT LEAST ONE YEAR LATE. IN FACT, MOT NOW EXPECTS TO HAVE DETAILED ENGINEERING SPECIFICATIONS FOR AIRPORTS FROM DUTCH CONSULTING ENGINEERS BY AUGUST 1973, AND IF THIS SCHEDULE IS MET, MOT INTENDS TO CONTACT PREQUALIFIED FIRMS TO BEGIN NEGOTIATING BIDS FOR AIRPORT CONSTRUCTION BY OCTOBER 1973. ACCORDING TO DEPUTY DIRECTOR OF CIVIL AVIATION, MOT HOPES TO START ACTUAL CONSTRUCTION AT IKEJA AND THREE OR FOUR OTHER UNSPECIFIED AIRPORTS BY JANUARY 1974, BUT THIS SCHEDULE IS TENTATIVE AND COULD SLIP BY SEVERAL MONTHS. LIST OF PREQUALIFIED FIRMS IS NOT YET AVAILABLE.

B. THERE ARE DEFINITELY ATTRACTIVE OPPORTUNITIES FOR U. S. SALES IN BROAD FIELD OF AVIATION EQUIPMENT, AS WAS POINTED OUT IN PRODUCT PRIORITY LISTING (LAGOS A-3). HOWEVER, QUESTION AT ISSUE IS WHETHER CURRENT OPPORTUNITIES CAN BE PURSUED THROUGH A TRADE MISSION. WE BELIEVE ANSWER IS NO BECAUSE BULK OF IMMINENT PURCHASES ARE TIED UP IN PREQUALIFICATION PROCEDURE WHICH CLOSED IN JANUARY.

C. WE DO NOT FORESEE ANY EARLY TENDERS (NEXT 18-24 MONTHS) FOR ADDITIONAL MAJOR AIRPORT DEVELOPMENT PROJECTS BEYOND CURRENT PROGRAM WHICH WAS ESTIMATED AT 150 MILLION DOLLARS IN 1971. THIS INCLUDES IKEJA AIRPORT PROJECT.

D. POSSIBILITIES FOR SALES OF U. S. AIRPORT SYSTEMS EQUIPMENT TO PRIME CONTRACTORS ARE LIKELY TO BE QUITE GOOD, BUT WE WILL PROBABLY NOT BE AWARE OF CONTRACTORS CHOSEN UNTIL AROUND TIME OF PROPOSED MISSION, IF THAT SOON. MOREOVER, CONTRACTORS ARE LIKELY TO BE FOREIGN FIRMS WITH PURCHASING OFFICES OUTSIDE NIGERIA.

E. MAJOR FUNDS TO BE SPENT ON AIRPORT DEVELOPMENT IN NEXT FEW YEARS ARE INCLUDED IN PROGRAMS FOR WHICH PREQUALIFICATION CLOSED ON JANUARY 13.
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